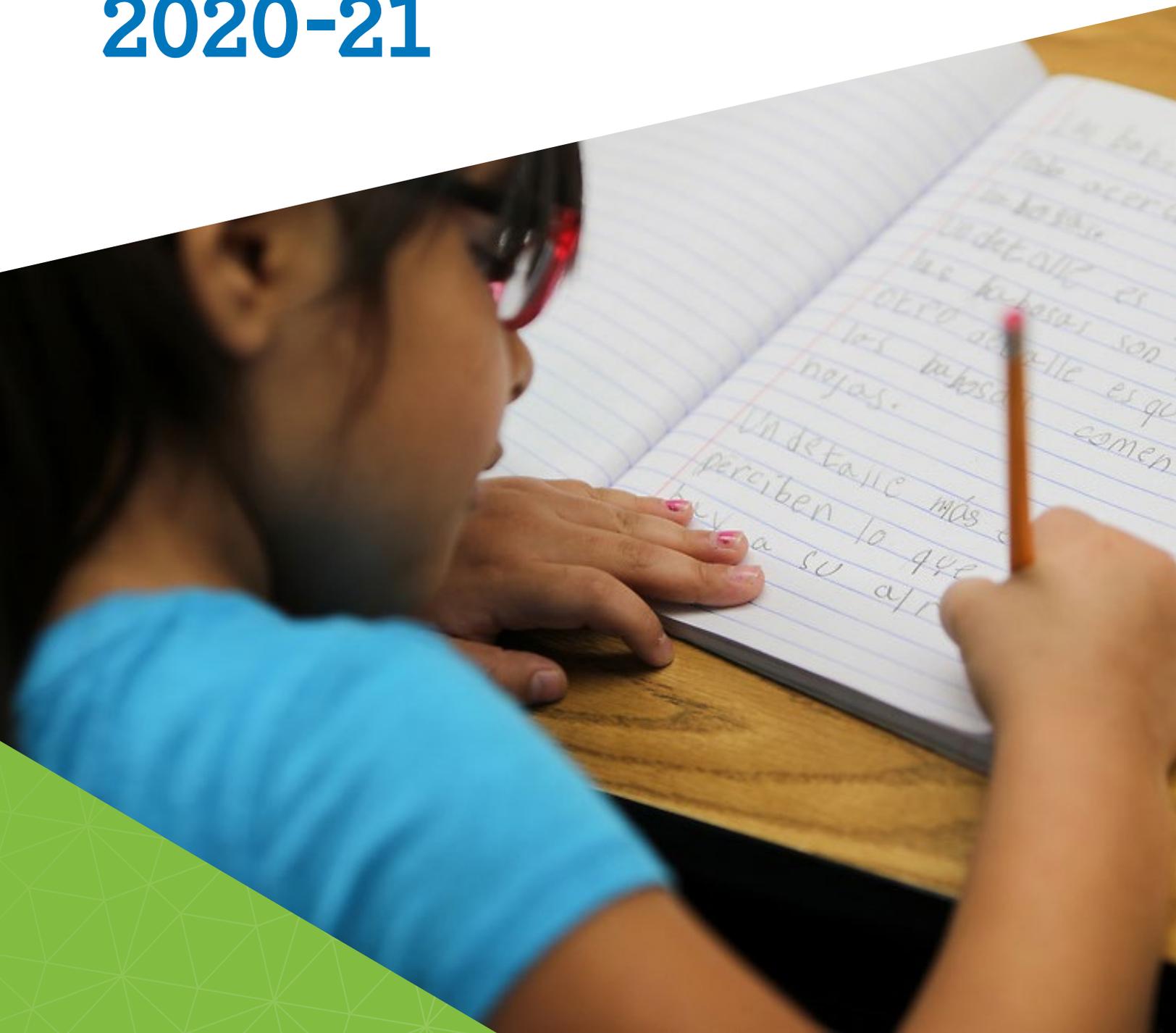




K-12 FAMILY GUIDE:

RETURNING TO SCHOOL 2020-21

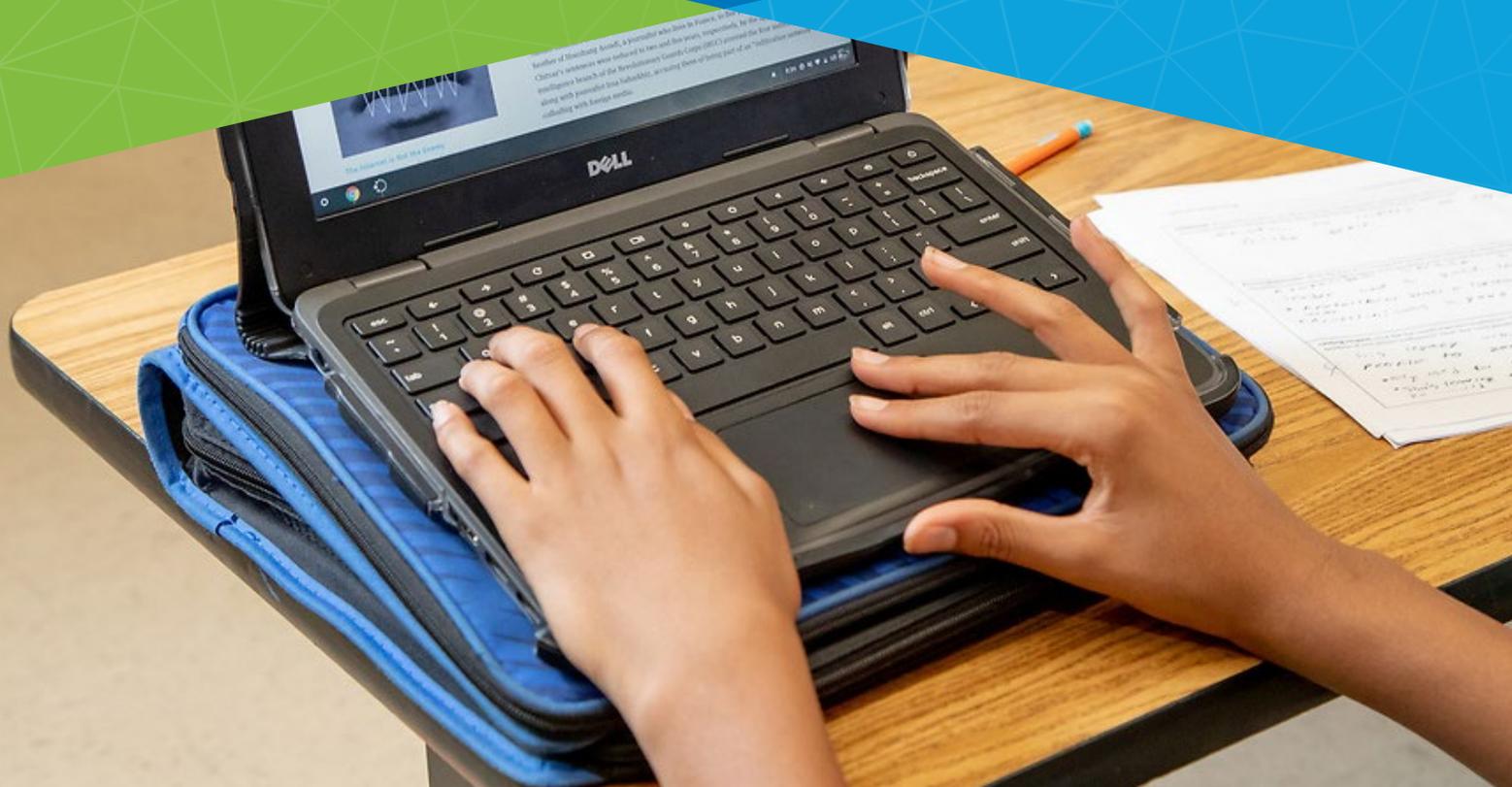




Starting the Year Safely with Remote Learning

Keeping our community healthy and safe means starting the school year differently this year than we ever have before. And still, all of DPS is beginning to feel the same sense of excitement and possibility that we do when the first day of school is almost here.

Our hope is always to return to in-person learning as much as is safely possible. And our plans will always be based on the latest guidance from our health partners, to ensure the safety of our students, families, and staff. We appreciate our community's involvement and understanding as we work to provide the best schooling and support for our students throughout this challenging time.



COVID Response Levels

DPS has been working closely with our local and state health experts and leaders to make sure our learning scenarios are aligned with [Colorado's three COVID levels](#): Stay at Home, Safer at Home, and Protect Our Neighbors. The state names which level we're in, which will likely change through the year as COVID conditions change. You can check [here](#) to see the current level.

The Colorado Department of Education sets guidance about how to open school while in each level, but there are many decisions that need to be made by DPS based on local conditions and needs. This is why learning scenarios can look different across different districts and counties in the Front Range and beyond. We partner with Denver health and local health experts to ensure learning scenarios are responsive to the local circumstances in Denver.

COVID LEVEL



**This is the level/
scenario that Denver
is currently in.*



DPS LEARNING SCENARIO

Remote learning only, with exceptions for a limited number of students who require in-person education due to specific learning needs.

Either remote learning only or a mix of in-person and remote learning. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) permits each school district to make this decision based on our community's specific needs. All DPS schools will begin in remote learning from Aug. 24 through Oct. 16, the end of the first quarter for many schools. We are working on a plan for bringing back small groups of students for in-person learning as soon as Sept. 8, and will share more details soon.

Guidance for this phase is still in development, but we expect most students would return to in-person learning full-time, while following social distancing and health/safety guidelines to limit the spread of the virus. *We will continue to monitor health data to plan for a gradual return to in-person instruction.*

Safe and Responsive Learning Options

For families who prefer as much in-person learning as possible given health conditions and guidelines, DPS has three learning scenarios that we will shift between, aligned to Colorado’s three COVID levels and the guidance of the Colorado Department of Education. Our schools are also providing a 100% virtual program option for students who prefer to learn at home for the full semester.

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REMOTE

- When health conditions require us to mostly stay at home and all in-person learning shifts to online only.
- The teachers, classmates and coursework will stay the same, but live instruction will be delivered through scheduled video conferences.
- Self-paced instruction will also be provided through the Learning Management System (LMS) for each education level: Seesaw for K-5th grades and Schoology for 6-12th grades. (Charter families should check with their schools on which LMS systems they will use.)
- Students will continue to have access to their school’s social-emotional and mental health resources, as well as services for students in English Language Acquisition, Special Education and/or Gifted and Talented programs.
- School-family teams will work together to determine whether and how a student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504, or Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) services can be provided in each learning scenario.

HYBRID

(A Mix of Remote and In-Person Learning)

- DPS expects to use the hybrid scenario in both the Safer at Home level and the Protect Our Neighbors level. At this point, we only expect to use Hybrid in the middle and high school grade levels.
- Students learn at home (remote) some of the time and learn at school (in person) some of the time, based on the number of students and adults permitted under social distancing guidelines.
- Students will be assigned to cohorts, or smaller groups of students and teachers who stay together for several weeks or more. This will help make contact tracing easier and limit the number of students and staff who need to be quarantined in the event of a positive COVID case within the cohort.
- Self-paced instruction is expected to be an ongoing component of Hybrid learning, in addition to live instruction at school and at home, using the Learning Management System (LMS) for each education level: Seesaw for K-5th grades and Schoology for 6-12th grades. (Charter families should check with their schools on which LMS systems they will use.)
- Students will continue to have access to their school's social-emotional and mental health resources, as well as services for students in English Language Acquisition, Special Education and/or Gifted and Talented programs.
- School-family teams will work together to determine whether and how a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504, or Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) services can be provided in each learning scenario.

IN-PERSON

- We expect this learning scenario only would be possible for grades ECE through 5th grade, when the state is at Safer at Home or Protect Our Neighbors levels.
- Students return to in-person learning full-time, while following social distancing and health/safety guidelines to limit the spread of the virus. Students and teachers will continue to use the Learning Management System (LMS) for their education level, to make it easy to shift between learning at home and learning in person.
- Students will be assigned to cohorts, or smaller groups of students and teachers who stay together for several weeks or more. This will help make contact tracing easier and limit the number of students and staff who need to be quarantined in the event of a positive COVID test within the cohort.
- In the Protect Our Neighbors level, students in middle and high schools will likely need to continue to use the hybrid scenario due to cohort size limitations.
- Students will continue to have access to their school's social-emotional and mental health resources, as well as services for students in English Language Acquisition, Special Education and/or Gifted and Talented programs.
- School-family teams will work together to determine whether and how a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504, or Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) services can be provided in each learning scenario.

VIRTUAL PROGRAM

- Schools will provide a 100% virtual program for families who are certain they do not want their student(s) to participate in any in-person learning during fall semester. There is no in-person component for families who enroll in this option.
- The decision to enroll in a virtual program is non-binding for the first quarter (Aug. 24-Oct. 16 for most schools). When you make your family's decisions for the second quarter, you're committing to that decision through December.
- Most classes will be held live, so students can engage directly with their teachers and classmates in coursework that is culturally relevant for our diverse Denver community. Self-paced instruction may also be available for students and families who have different schedules.
- Students will continue to have access to their school's social-emotional and mental health resources, as well as services for students in English Language Acquisition, Special Education and/or Gifted and Talented programs.
- School-family teams will work together to determine whether and how a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504, or Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) services can be provided in the virtual program.

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While we know that school during COVID-19 will take some getting used to, we are committed to transitioning students between our three scenarios without significant learning disruptions. Regardless of whether students are in-person, hybrid, remote, or in the virtual program, DPS will ensure they receive the academic support they need. We will re-engage students who need the most academic support, including those who had challenges participate in remote learning in the spring. We will continue to teach grade-level content while adding in supports to help address unfinished learning. We'll also proactively address our students' mental health challenges related to the COVID-19 crisis through Whole Child supports and culturally responsive educational practices and curriculum.

Improvements to Remote Learning for 2020–21

Based on the feedback families and educators shared in our May survey, we are planning several improvements to remote instruction, whether it's in the virtual program, or as part of fully remote or hybrid instruction for all students.

- ✔ Strengthening teacher-student relationships through **live daily instruction** that requires less at-home adult assistance.
- ✔ Supporting families with **consistent expectations for attendance, instruction, and grading** across grade levels and schools. (Grading practices may vary at charter schools.)
- ✔ Simplifying the at-home learning experience for students and families by using **consistent learning management systems** — Seesaw for K-5th grades and Schoology for 6-12th grades. Using the same systems districtwide will make it easy to see upcoming lessons and assignments, keep track of which assignments are completed, and turn in finished work for teacher feedback. (Charter families should check with their schools on which LMS systems they will use.)
- ✔ Ensuring we **reach all students** by closing the gaps in internet and device access, providing tech support opportunities and tutorials in multiple languages.
- ✔ Developing supports for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and English Language Development that adapt more smoothly to shifts in learning scenarios.

Learning Management System Access and Support

Online learning programs to help manage coursework, assignments and more

We want to be sure that all parents/guardians have access to the Learning Management Systems (LMS) students and teachers will use throughout the school year for coursework, assignments, feedback and more. Below is more information about the two systems district-run schools will use this year. Charter families should check with their schools on which LMS systems they will use.

Please note, the resources below also will be available for speakers of other languages.



GRADES K-5

On Aug. 20, families will receive an invitation at the email listed in DPS' Parent Portal to create an account and connect to their student in Seesaw. If you have already created a Seesaw account, you'll be able to use your previous login information.

More resources for getting started with Seesaw:

[Seesaw Parent Account Information](#)

Video Introduction to Seesaw:
[English](#) | [Spanish](#)

[Login Guide](#)

[Seesaw Parent/Guardian FAQ](#)



GRADES 6-12

The first step to connecting with Schoolology is setting up your Parent Portal account at parentaccountcreation.dpsk12.org.

If you already have a Parent Portal account set up, you'll automatically have a Schoolology account connected to your student(s). Just log into the Parent Portal, click on 'See All Apps' and select Schoolology to be automatically logged in to your account.

More resources for getting started with Schoolology:

[Schoolology Parent One-Pager](#)

[Parent/Guardian Login Video](#)

[App Login Guide](#)

[Schoolology Parent/Guardian FAQ](#)

Health & Safety Protocols

When health conditions and guidance allow students and staff to return to our buildings in person, everyone will be expected to follow the health and safety protocols below, which were developed in partnership with local and state health experts — including the [Denver Department of Public Health and Environment](#), the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment](#), [Metro Denver Partnership for Health \(MDPH\)](#), and the Governor’s Office. As health conditions change in our community, we will keep you updated on any changes to this guidance.



MASKS AND OTHER PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Masks, face shields, plexiglass barriers



COHORT GROUPING

35 or smaller



PHYSICAL DISTANCING

6ft between adults, at least 3ft between students/students and adults



HAND WASHING AND SANITIZING

Upon arrival & every 2 hours



TEMPERATURE AND SYMPTOM SCREENING

Daily using health screening app or at the door



BUILDING ENTRY/EXIT

Building traffic control & signage



VENTILATION

Optimizing HVAC & air exchange systems



CLEANING PROCEDURES

3x per day - nightly (varies by area)



TESTING

Free, biweekly testing strongly recommended for staff; exploring access/options for students

Keeping People Healthy

MASKS

Everyone is required to wear a mask when on school grounds. All persons should follow the [CDC guidelines for facial coverings](#). We are currently awaiting further direction from public health experts about mask wearing for our youngest learners. Schools will make exceptions for students or staff who are unable to wear a mask for specific health reasons, while still maintaining health and safety for those around them.

We know that wearing masks all day is challenging, so students and staff will be able to remove their masks during mealtimes and during special outdoor “mask breaks” that schools can schedule throughout the day.

FACE SHIELDS

Schools will receive face shields and can determine how to use those with their staff and/or students based on need, such as for teachers and students in early education, English Language Development or special education.

HANDWASHING

All students and educators will be asked to wash hands upon arrival and at least once every two hours. Hand sanitizer may also be used. Schools will have supplies of hand sanitizer and soap to allow for frequent hand-washing, and classrooms and school facilities will be disinfected regularly.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Everyone entering a building, including students and staff, must engage in a daily health screen. All adults and students will get a temperature check and/or in person symptom screening before entering the building. Symptom screening may be a home pre-screen or an in-person screen at the school by school staff. Students/staff with a temperature of 100.4 or above will not be able to stay at school. Students and staff should stay home if they are unwell and experiencing symptoms, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, abdominal pain, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or headache.

HYGIENE

Schools will help reinforce safe and healthy hygiene behaviors (such as covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or elbows) with students, staff and families.

HEALTH OFFICE PROTOCOLS

Each school will have a health office with one cot for every 400 students, a dedicated bathroom for health office use only, a sink with running hot and cold water, easily cleanable surfaces, and an isolated area for sick students to be separated from well students. Schools will also designate additional areas for isolating students, if there is not enough capacity in the health office.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Wherever possible, students should maintain 3 feet of distance. Adults should maintain 6 feet of distance from other adults, and 3 feet of distance from students. When 3 feet isn't possible, a physical barrier like plexiglass may be used.

STUDENT COHORTS

A cohort is a set group of students who participate in a class or other activity together for several weeks. The guidelines for cohorts are slightly different depending on the education level of the students:

Elementary

Students in grades K-5 can be in a cohort of up to 35 students, as long as they maintain 3 feet of distance and follow mask guidance.

Middle and high school

Students in grades 6-12 can be in a cohort of up to 35 students, as long as they maintain 3 feet of distance and follow mask guidance. If students need to be able to participate in more than one cohort, schools may create multiple smaller cohorts so that students interact with no more than 35 classmates total.

Athletics, extracurricular activities and before- and afterschool care

For athletics, we will follow [Colorado High School Activities Association \(CHSAA\)](#) guidance. Extracurricular and cocurricular activity guidelines will be addressed in separate guidance that is currently pending. Before and afterschool care guidance is also pending.

MEALS

All meals will be eaten in the classroom. Students will wash hands before and after eating. Sharing of food will not be permitted. Meals will be served either in the classroom or in the cafeteria. If served in the cafeteria, students will get the food at a designated time with their cohort and take it back to their classroom.

CLOSED CAMPUS

High school campuses will be closed, which means students will not be able to leave to pick up food offsite.

RECESS/PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

As much as possible, schools will plan for recess and PE to take place outside, with students staying in their class cohorts. Students can use and share playground/gym equipment with their cohorts. Students may have recess/PE without masks only if held outside AND students are maintaining six feet or more distance from one another. Students from different cohorts can be outside at the same time as long as they are in separate areas (e.g. field and playground). If Recess/PE must take place inside, students must wear masks.

SINGING AND WIND INSTRUMENTS

Singing and wind instruments are not allowed and schools should make adjustments to music and other courses accordingly.

Quarantining for Safety

POSITIVE COVID-19 TESTS IN A COHORT

If there is a confirmed positive COVID-19 test in a cohort, DPS will follow the current recommendations of the health department regarding quarantine or other procedures.

What Families Can Do at Home

- ✓ Regularly wash your reusable cloth masks at home.
- ✓ Follow local health guidance.
- ✓ Follow home hygiene guidance.

Keeping School Buildings and Classrooms Safe and Clean

CLEANING

Custodial staff will clean frequently touched surfaces in schools and on buses at least daily and between use as much as possible. Classrooms that are used by multiple cohorts will be cleaned between each use. Plush toys or other hard-to-clean classroom items will be removed. Outdoor playground equipment will not be disinfected, so students and staff should ensure hands are washed frequently after use of any playground equipment.

CLASSROOMS

Classroom seating will be arranged to ensure as much distancing between students as possible. Desks will be rearranged so that students are all facing the same direction and community desks will be removed.

HALLWAYS

Hallways will be clearly marked as one-way, and schools will arrange class start/end times to keep cohorts from mixing while in hallways.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The times when students may arrive at school in the morning and leave in the afternoon may be staggered. This will ensure enough time and space for schools to conduct arrival symptom screening checks, maintain physical distance, ensure all are wearing masks or face shields on school property, and ensure no visitors or family enter school buildings past the front office.

LIBRARIES

Libraries will be closed, though librarians can bring books to students and/or students can access books in their classroom. Books will need to be disinfected (wiped down) after use.

FIELD TRIPS AND OVERNIGHTS

These trips will not be allowed for the time being.

MATERIALS

All papers, pencils, markers, chromebooks should be for one individual student and not shared. When possible, teachers will assign classroom books to individual students. If shared, books will need to be disinfected (wiped down) after use.

LOCKERS

Lockers will not be used, so students should bring items to their classroom. Under limited circumstances, schools may make exceptions for students who need to use lockers as part of their IEP and/or 504 Plan.

VENTILATION AND FANS

Due to the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, portable fans, window air conditioning units, portable cooling units and/or swamp coolers that blow air across the room will not be permitted. Our health partners advise that these types of devices may pose an increased risk of spreading the virus. While some traditional cooling tools are not available, we have invested \$5 million of CARES Act Funds to ensure we have the best possible airflow, air filtering and temperature control capabilities in district facilities.

Keeping Bus Transportation Safe and Healthy

Changes to transportation services for the 2020-21 school year.

Although we'll be starting the school year remotely, we wanted to provide up-to-date information about bus services to help you plan for the return to in-person learning later this fall. Under the health and social-distancing [guidelines for transportation](#), our buses will only be able to operate at 33% capacity. Unfortunately, this means many students — including most middle and high school general education students — will no longer be eligible to ride the yellow bus to school. Eligible high school students will still be able to use a DPS-RTD bus pass.

DPS will prioritize transportation for our youngest and highest-needs learners, as well as students legally entitled to transportation, such as those in special education for whom transportation is identified in their individualized education plan (IEP) or those who are experiencing homelessness. The full list of schools that will continue to receive bus transportation services is [here](#). For a guide on how to check your student's transportation eligibility, please click [here](#).

MASKS

Bus drivers and students are required to wear a mask on the bus for the duration of the ride.

HEALTH SCREENING

Families should conduct a health screen before boarding the bus.

SEATING

Buses will allow only one child per seat, with a maximum of 24 students per bus. Siblings or members of the same household may be permitted to share the same seat.

+PASSES

Students must use a +Pass when riding a DPS bus. This will help us perform contact tracing should a student or driver test positive for COVID-19. +Passes will be delivered to your student's school for distribution at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year.

Social-Emotional and Mental Health

We know our students will likely have an even greater need for mental health services due to the impact of the pandemic as well as increased levels of racial and economic trauma nation-wide. To help our students cope — and thrive — we remain committed to infusing social-emotional learning within academic learning in all curriculum areas, and to supporting mental health and wellness for our students, families and staff.

Social-Emotional Supports

This school year, we will increase screenings and trainings around social emotional health in schools, including:

- Social Emotional Screening for students.
- Suicide prevention curriculum taught in 5th, 6th and 9th grades.
- Proactive education to reduce the stigma around mental health for both students and adults.
- Training for our teachers and other school-based staff in how to look for signs of and address the complex needs of students during this time:
 - Integrating training in trauma-informed practices, behavior, social emotional learning, discipline and COVID-specific health training.
 - How to effectively deliver social emotional and mental health supports in a remote environment.
- Our charter schools will be offering strong social-emotional programming, although their approaches may look different. Charter families should check with their charter school.

Mental Health Services and Supports

We encourage you to access our community-based resources for your student's mental health, including:

- Reach out to your school's support team to find out what mental health services are available, including school psychologists, social workers and counselors.
- Mental health supports available through our 18 [School-Based Health Centers](#).
- Community-based mental health providers, including Mental Health Center of Denver, Jewish Family Service, Maria Droste Counseling and Denver Children's Advocacy Center, who provide services to students in over 80 school buildings. Please contact your school mental health team for more information.
- Visit our website for additional [family resources](#) to support social-emotional and mental health.

Essential Services

Food Services

DPS will continue to provide grab-and-go meals this fall to ensure that students have access to reliable, nutritious meals to keep them learning and growing, whether at home or at school.

School-Based Health Supports

COVID RESPONSE

DPS has a COVID response team that supports schools, staff, and our families across the district as cases emerge. Every school will designate two COVID coordinators that will work with the district COVID response team.

SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS

All 18 [Denver Health School-Based Health Centers](#) will be open to support student health needs at no cost to families, including required immunizations. Our centers will also be able to support with issues related to COVID-19, such as assessing sick students and connecting students to testing at other Denver Health facilities.

Additional Resources and Supports

For medical questions related to COVID-19, please contact your medical health provider.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HELPLINE



720-423-3054



face@dpsk12.org

FACE CENTERS

Contact one of our centers for support with food, rental assistance, job resources, health care, basic needs, energy assistance, and more.

- John H. Amesse Elementary, 720-424-2961 or Ambar_Suero@dpsk12.org
- Johnson Elementary, 720-424-2970 or Lindsey_Hazel@dpsk12.org

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT



720-423-3888



dotshelp.dpsk12.org



For the latest updates, announcements and resources, please visit www.dpsk12.org.

Colorado's Three COVID Levels

Stay at Home Guidance

		ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH
LEARNING PLAN	Learning Scenario	Remote		
	Instruction	Video: live & self-paced		
	LMS*	Seesaw*	Schoology*	Schoology*
HEALTH STANDARDS AND PROTOCOLS	Cohort Size	N/A		
	Masks	Follow Governor's Orders in public spaces		
	Physical Distance	Follow CDC Guidelines while in public spaces		
	Adult Meetings	Virtual		
	Hygiene	Follow CDC Guidelines while in public spaces		
TRANSPORTATION		Not provided		
FOOD SERVICES		Grab-and-go meals and distribution sites		
PHYSICAL HEALTH SERVICES		School-Based Health Clinics open		
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES		Available from school social workers and psychologists; community mental health partners		

**Charter families should check with their schools on LMS systems being used.*

Safer at Home Guidance

		ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH
LEARNING PLAN	Learning Scenario	Remote learning OR 100% in-person	Remote learning OR Hybrid (in-person/remote)	
	Instruction	Live & self-paced by video; in-person instruction when health conditions permit		
	LMS*	Seesaw*	Schoology*	Schoology*
HEALTH STANDARDS AND PROTOCOLS	Cohort Size	Up to 35 students/ cohort Up to 4 teachers/ cohort	Up to 35 students/cohort Up to 3 teachers/cohort	
	Masks	Required on school grounds and bus transportation		
	Physical Distance	3' social distancing for students, 6' social distancing for adults		
	Adult Meetings	Virtual		
	Hygiene	All students and educators will be asked to wash hands (or use hand sanitizer) upon arrival and at least once every two hours. Classrooms and school facilities will be disinfected regularly		
TRANSPORTATION	Available for youngest and highest-needs learners, as well as students legally entitled to transportation, such as those who are experiencing homelessness or who have transportation in their special education Individualized Education Plan (IEP) List of schools receiving bus service	Available for students legally entitled to transportation, such as those who are experiencing homelessness or who have transportation in their special education Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	Available for students legally entitled to transportation, such as those who are experiencing homelessness or who have transportation in their special education Individualized Education Plan (IEP) DPS-RTD bus passes for eligible students	
FOOD SERVICES	Grab-and-go meals and distribution sites and/or provided in schools following health guidelines			
PHYSICAL HEALTH SERVICES	School-Based Health Clinics open			
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	Available from school social workers and psychologists; community mental health partners			

**Charter families should check with their schools on LMS systems being used.*

Protect Our Neighbors Guidance

		ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH
LEARNING PLAN	Learning Scenario	In-person	Hybrid (in-person/remote) OR In-Person	
	Instruction	Classroom-based when health conditions permit		
	LMS*	Seesaw*	Schoology*	Schoology*
HEALTH STANDARDS AND PROTOCOLS	Cohort Size	Normal class sizes may be possible Teacher/student ratios still being developed	Still being developed, pending additional guidance on cohort size	
	Masks	Required on school grounds and bus transportation		
	Physical Distance	3' social distancing for students, 6' social distancing for adults		
	Adult Meetings	Virtual		
	Hygiene	Follow CDC guidelines while at home and in public spaces		
TRANSPORTATION	Available for youngest and highest-needs learners, as well as students legally entitled to transportation, such as those who are experiencing homelessness or who have transportation in their special education Individualized Education Plan (IEP) List of schools receiving bus service	Available for students legally entitled to transportation, such as those who are experiencing homelessness or who have transportation in their special education Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	Available for students legally entitled to transportation, such as those who are experiencing homelessness or who have transportation in their special education Individualized Education Plan (IEP) DPS-RTD bus passes for eligible students	
FOOD SERVICES	Meals provided in schools, following health guidelines	Grab-and-go meals and distribution sites and/or provided in schools following health guidelines		
PHYSICAL HEALTH SERVICES	School-Based Health Clinics open			
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	Available from school social workers and psychologists; community mental health partners			

**Charter families should check with their schools on LMS systems being used.*